

LODGE-LANSDALE REFORM PROGRAM WILL FAIL

Hanoi VNA International Service in English 1600 GMT 15 September 1965--B

(Text) Hanoi, 15 September--The radical social reform program worked out by Henry Cabot Lodge, the new U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam, and Col. Edward Lansdale, secretary of the Rural Construction Council, will fail earlier than any previous program of pacification, terrorism, and war provocation, said the Hanoi English-language fortnightly VIETNAM COURIER in its current issue.

In an article headed "Will Cabot Lodge Fare Any Better?" the paper said: The towering Lodge, his hands clasped behind his back, had to bend forward as he spoke to the Vietnamese Chief of State U.S. Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, smiling and relaxed-looking, presented his credentials to the South Vietnam Government After the presentation, other top-ranking members of the U.S. mission here chatted informally and joked with Thieu and other Vietnamese officials The tall, gray-haired diplomat, who is 63, went through an informal 20-minute ceremony with the ease of a man who had done it once before . . . (AP, 25 August).

This farce which was nothing new is staged again in the so-called Independence Palace in Saigon with the same actors: The American boss and the puppet clique who cannot live but for U.S. dollars.

Now that Lodge returns to Saigon, the situation is quite different from that a year ago. The U.S. special war is obviously doomed, the puppet army and administration are facing an unavoidable disintegration, while the South Vietnam revolutionary forces are stronger than ever with a vast and solid area. Treading on the same path in the tunnel with no end in sight, he draws out of his pockets a program of radical social reform comprising six points, including the bolstering of the puppet government in Saigon to prevent a collapse from within, the implementation of land reform, the setting up of an intelligence service, the consolidation of the disintegrating puppet administration in the countryside, and the revision of American aid to stop the stooges' leakage.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon boasts of the oilspot strategy consisting of three stages to occupy the whole of South Vietnam.

To tell the truth, both plans are but another version of the stick-and-carrot policy of the U.S. president.

Moreover, Washington appoints retired Maj. Gen. Edward Lansdale--a CIA expert in engineering coups d'etat and former adviser to Magsaysay in the Philippines and Ngo Dinh Diem--to enforce Lodge's program in his capacity as chairman of the U.S. mission liaison group to the secretary general of the Central Rural Construction Council, Premier Nguyen Cao Ky.

Upon arriving in Saigon the American ambassador clamorously stated that he would bring about a true revolution which will make possible a new and better life for the Vietnamese people. However, a review of Lodge's program does not show anything more than an attempt to implement the plans drawn up by Johnson and McNamara which embody the designs and illusions of the U.S. ruling circles to retrieve the defeat of their neocolonialist war in South Vietnam by halting the disintegration of all the puppet army and administration, bringing in more American troops to hold key bases, then carry out step by step pacification programs aimed at reoccupying the villages freed by the NPLSV.

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